



– Institute’s Colloquium –

**Dr. Rubina Jasani
(University of Manchester)**

‘If I did not pray, the jinn would press me down even further’: ethnic and cultural determinants of help seeking among ethnic minorities in Britain

Anthropological literature on mental illness speaks about the role of explanatory models of distress and well being as being key in determining help seeking, but more generally in understanding issues of compliance and non-compliance and disengagement with services. Using such perspectives, in relation to ethnicity and culture was the focus of larger study from which this paper is derived. It draws on ethnographic evidence from the qualitative narratives collected for the larger study. While services claim that ethnic minorities have cultural explanations of mental illness and hence don't seek help, our narratives show how these explanations in many cases are competing and contrasting and hence, no one model can explain the complex interplay between culture, illness explanations and help seeking. Ambiguity, both in relation to explanations of mental illness and cultural understandings of mental illness was identified as a key finding, however, religion, culture and cultural rituals were central to the stories of relief that patients and their carers told. This paper unpacks these contradictions and taps into the dynamic healing practices that the South Asian diasporic communities engage in.

on Wednesday, 2nd of Juli 2014

4-6 p.m.

**Institute of Ethnology
Studtstraße 21, Raum STU 105 (2.10)**

Everybody is welcome!